

Working Notes

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF MAY 19, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Nadine Bell called the May 19, 2014 Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

Those in attendance: Councilor Guy Drapeau and Councilor Bill MacDonald. Also present: Barbara Gilbert (Director of Public Safety/Town Manager), Chief Mike Custer (RHPD), Deputy Chief Bill Keehner (RHPD), Chief Mike Garrahy (RHFD), Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom, Assistant Chief Dave Kromas (RHFD), Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb (RHVAA), Lieutenant Brian Klett (RHPD), Jessica Dumas (Executive Assistant to Town Manager), Councilor Joe Kochanek and Councilor Cathy Vargas.

Those absent: Chief Joe Grayeb (RHVAA).

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES & WORKING NOTES

Councilor Guy Drapeau made a motion to approve the Minutes and Working Notes of the March 17, 2014 meeting of the Public Safety Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bill MacDonald and adopted unanimously.

III. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked if anyone from the public wished to speak at this time. No one from the public wished to.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update – 60 West Street

Chief Mike Custer said there was one medical call at 60 West Street for the month of April 2014. The ambulance transported an eighty year old male, who had been in respiratory distress, to the hospital. There had also been a false alarm call there and that was triggered by the alarm company.

Town Manager Barbara Gilbert referred to the legal front for 60 West Street and she said they didn't make it to the Supreme Court docket. This will hopefully happen in the fall.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked the Committee if they had any comments or questions. Councilor Bill MacDonald said he didn't have any. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Town

Manager Barbara Gilbert how they had missed the Supreme Court docket. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said the Town has been on file for this and it is the Supreme Court that decides its docket. This Town was not one of those that the Supreme Court selected for the month of May 2014. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked if this is a random selection and Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said yes.

B. Discussion – IT Concerns – Fire Department

Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she would turn this meeting over to Chief Mike Garrahy now because he was the one who wanted this item on this meeting's agenda. Chief Mike Garrahy said thank you and he said that he would be turning this over to Assistant Chief Dave Kromas very shortly. Chief Mike Garrahy said he appreciated the Town Council providing a venue for them in order to discuss these concerns. The RHFD has had several concerns and he said at the meeting of the Town Council last week, they were given the instruction to bring public safety IT concerns to this Committee.

Chief Mike Garrahy turned the meeting over to Assistant Chief Dave Kromas at this time. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas thanked everybody for giving them the time this evening for this. The RHFD, as a Public Safety Agency, has some definite concerns with the way that their communications and IT is going at this time. He told the Committee that he had numerous e-mails which he would be glad to provide to them. These e-mails were between himself, Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom and Chief Mike Garrahy. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said everyone had been cc'd on these e-mails. These e-mails were with regards to the RHFD requesting assistance from the purchasing of computers to different monitors they needed. They saw that Windows XP wasn't going to be supported any longer so they have been trying to purchase newer computers. The RHFD has a very small IT budget so he said they have been looking to replace their Windows XP computers over time. He mentioned that he has a full inventory of all of the computers that the RHFD has and he would be more than glad to share this with the IT Committee if they would like to invite him to their meetings.

Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he was going to be blunt but this wasn't him being personal. This was him doing business instead. He said that he was sorry but the IT support in this Town isn't support. He explained that the RHFD are "stepchildren" and they are always looked at as the "second person at the plate" because most of them at the RHFD aren't full time employees there. They don't get an answer a lot of times when they ask for something. He referred to the numerous e-mails he had where he has addressed John Nowakowski (IT Department) and all of the hierarchy, including Janis Sapia (IT Department), who has retired. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas referred again to the very small budget that the RHFD has and he said that they have always stayed within their budget. He believes that the RHFD was the only department in this Town that had come in under budget this year from what they had been at last year. He mentioned that the RHFD got the control of a budgetary number back for IT services approximately ten or twelve years ago. He has been trying to get new computers for the better part of six or seven months. He has sent e-mails about this and has given budget numbers for these but he gets no response. He told the Committee again that he would be more than glad to give them copies of these e-mails. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she would definitely like a copy of these e-mails. Councilor Bill MacDonald said he thinks that these should go to this

entire Committee. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said absolutely and she said that goes without saying.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell confirmed with Assistant Chief Dave Kromas that the timing for some of these things is six to seven months. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said that most of the e-mails he had with him this evening have been within the last three or four months. He mentioned how they can only have so much room within the system for their e-mails. The RHFD asked for their website to be updated less than one month ago. He mentioned again that he knows that Janis Sapia isn't here anymore. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said the only person who the RHFD gets a lot of support out of is Wally Cone (IT Department) and he is always there for them if they need a printer fixed, etc. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said a server had recently been removed from Fire Headquarters and the comment made was that this was because it wasn't connected to anything. He said that was fine but the RHFD paid for this out of their budget so it was theirs. He has gotten no answer as to what has happened to this.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked Assistant Chief Dave Kromas if anyone has been copied on these e-mails besides the IT Department. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said the entire Chief Staff and Finance Director John Mehr have been. Some of the older e-mails had gone to Janis Sapia.

Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said the RHFD uses Firehouse Software, which is web based. This is seven updates behind now. The RHFD has no ability to do any updating on their own. He understands about when there is a resident program on their servers but he mentioned again that this is web based software. He explained that it is very easy to check for updates and then push them but this isn't happening. He referenced one of his e-mails and he said that he had sent John Nowakowski a notification as recently as April 25, 2014, with regards to what Firehouse Software had sent out. He gave more details about this and he said this is something that the RHFD pays for through its service contract for this software. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Assistant Chief Dave Kromas what the notification was for again. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said it was for updates to the system and the compatibilities as a migration is made from Windows XP Support to Windows 7. Their whole dispatch Firehouse Software system is based on all of these updates. He explained that when they go to do a report that there might be fields that they are required to report to NFIRS (National Fire Incident Reporting System). He then said that he would turn to Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom now if he wanted to comment on this. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas then said that he couldn't tell them that there are changes in those fields but they won't know unless they have these updates. He said when an e-mail is sent to the IT Department or when they are asked about updates that these just aren't there. Since 2012/2013, the Chief Staff has been asking for a VPN access to Firehouse Software. This wouldn't be for the entire RHFD but just for the Chief Staff, which is a very small group. This would be for them to be able to complete reports when they are on scene and in the field so that they can add comments and notes. Some things need to be entered in right away. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Assistant Chief Dave Kromas if he has asked for that as well and he said that he has numerous times.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell said this obviously is a totally unacceptable situation and she started to ask Town Manager Barbara Gilbert something when Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said they

will have a meeting between all of the parties. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said for this meeting to be tomorrow please and Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said yes.

Councilor Guy Drapeau told Assistant Chief Dave Kromas that he needs to come to the IT Committee with this information too so that they can weigh in on it. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he had spoken to Chief Mike Garrahy about this. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas then said that even the IT Consultant that the Town paid a fee to had stated that there should be representation from public safety on the IT Committee. He told Councilor Guy Drapeau that while he may be on the Public Safety Committee and the IT Committee that he really doesn't know all of the needs that the RHFD has. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas asked who would be better to voice these needs than a member of the RHFD who is educated in NFIRS or he said this could be himself. Councilor Guy Drapeau said that he would argue differently and that they have gone even further by creating an IT Committee that is designed exclusively just for handling these issues. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he agreed. Councilor Guy Drapeau said that he and Councilor Bill MacDonald are on the IT Committee, along with Councilor Frank Szeps. Councilor Guy Drapeau told Assistant Chief Dave Kromas that he didn't have any problems with him being represented at every meeting. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he would be more than willing to volunteer for this. He mentioned how he has spoken to members of the RHPD. Councilor Guy Drapeau said that the IT Committee was created in the first place for them to seriously take a look at some of the holes that they have been having with the IT service. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas told Councilor Guy Drapeau that he appreciates what he is doing and he mentioned again that this isn't personal. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said the RHFD has "fallen on deaf ears". He then mentioned how Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom does plan reviews so he needs a big screen in order to look at specifications on one side and blueprints on the other. By Statute, Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom only has so many days to complete a plan review. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas then mentioned how it was ominous when everyone was telling him that Firehouse Software was down so he called John Nowakowski on a weekend who then told him that everything was up so they were good to go. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he then asked John Nowakowski how he knew this and he told him that he logged into a VPN. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he works for the State of Connecticut. He has a virtual desktop and a VPN. That network is a lot bigger than the one the Town has. He then mentioned how the Fire Marshal's Office was given tablets that don't work with Firehouse Software because they aren't compatible. They have been in the process now of talking with Firehouse Software. This upgrade would cost approximately \$2,000 and a different type of tablet would be needed. This is for the Fire Marshal's Office while they are out in the field doing inspections. This issue has been brought from Janis Sapia to John Nowakowski, etc. Councilor Guy Drapeau guessed that this wasn't vetted and Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he didn't think so.

Councilor Guy Drapeau said this list is ominous and long. He apologized to the RHFD that they are at the point where they have to come to this Committee for this. He further supported and encouraged Chairwoman Nadine Bell's statement about how they should get with Town Manager Barbara Gilbert immediately and with the IT people to start "hashing" their issues out. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said there will be a meeting tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. Councilor Guy Drapeau told Assistant Chief Dave Kromas to give them an update on this at the next Public Safety Committee meeting as to what has happened. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he will

and he told this Committee that he appreciated their time. Councilor Guy Drapeau said this was brought to them initially so he thinks that they should follow through on it.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she would like for this to be a continuous update for this Committee and she also requested for Town Manager Barbara Gilbert to advise them about the meeting after they have it tomorrow. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said she will.

Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he wasn't saying that John Nowakowski doesn't do anything for the RHFD. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said that John Nowakowski is a really good IT guy and he does provide support to the RHFD. The RHFD also understands that John Nowakowski is shorthanded at this time.

Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said there was a final thing that he wanted to discuss. He mentioned the RHFD's cellular communications. He realizes that John Nowakowski has taken over the RHFD's budget number for cellular communications. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said the RHFD is just like the RHPD. The RHFD is there twenty-four hours per day, three hundred and sixty-five days per year. He said he has hazardous material databases on his cell phone so that he can pull this information up when he arrives at a fire call. He explained some more and mentioned about if the RHFD can at least have the ability to be the administrator of their own account for cell phones. The RHFD can turn these bills over to whoever the Town wants to have pay them. He explained that he needs the ability to get a cell phone when he needs one. Cellular communications had been taken from the Facilities Department approximately twelve years ago and they were given to the RHFD because of these same issues. He mentioned that when Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom is doing an investigation, he is talking to confidential informants sometimes. Some investigations are criminal ones in conjunction with the RHPD. This is confidential with regards to the people who they are speaking to on these phones. He mentioned about people who aren't in the hierarchy of the RHPD or the RHFD reviewing or perusing the cell phone bills. He feels that after a Department Head signs off on a bill after they have reviewed it that it is fine whoever the Town wants to have process it but he said the RHFD needs to have the ability to have administrative rights over their own cellular communications. He explained some more and he said that he manages these accounts and Chief Mike Garrahy reviews everything that he does.

Councilor Guy Drapeau told Assistant Chief Dave Kromas that he was going to respond to this but he was going to defer his long answer to this evening's Town Council meeting. Councilor Guy Drapeau referred to the protocol. The money has been moved and he said it isn't going anywhere. He told Assistant Chief Dave Kromas that it will be up to the RHFD and Town Manager Barbara Gilbert with regards to however the protocol lands after that. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said thank you and he said that he was fine with that answer. He said they are all trying to do the same thing and Councilor Guy Drapeau said right.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell thanked the RHFD for bringing this forward to this Committee and she said that she appreciated it. Councilor Guy Drapeau said thank you very much. Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked Councilor Bill MacDonald if he had anything to say. Councilor Bill MacDonald said this is absolutely the first Committee that they should come to whenever there is any public safety issue. He said first that this clearly is a public safety issue and second that this

is a technology one. He encouraged the RHFD to not worry about another Committee anytime that there is anything like this that relates to public safety because this is the Committee that they need to come to first. He said that they will do everything that they can and he is looking forward to the next IT Committee meeting. He asked Town Manager Barbara Gilbert if they had a date for that. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said she isn't part of that and she really doesn't know the meeting schedule. Councilor Bill MacDonald thinks this is something that will take place relatively soon. Councilor Guy Drapeau recommended to Assistant Chief Dave Kromas to come to that meeting. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said he had been present for the last IT Committee meeting. Jessica Dumas said the next IT Committee meeting will be held on June 11, 2014. Assistant Chief Dave Kromas said thank you and he said that he would be at that. Councilor Guy Drapeau told Chief Mike Custer that he recommended that he come to that meeting too. Chief Mike Custer said absolutely. The RHPD planned on being at that and he said that they have some concerns as well. He wasn't sure where to start with these concerns and he had thought that the IT Committee would have been the appropriate one. He was surprised when he had seen this item on this meeting's agenda and he said that he will discuss his issues at the IT Committee meeting.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell said they can certainly keep this item on the Public Safety Committee's agenda as a monthly update for the RHFD and the RHPD or whoever has issues because she would rather that they hear about these sooner rather than them waiting until this escalates to this level. She thanked the RHFD for bringing this forward.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were none.

V. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

A. Fire

Chief Mike Garrahy said the RHFD responded to 37 calls for the month of April and the year-to-date total is 177. There were 583 training hours for a year-to-date total of 1,619. There were 242 Administrative Hours with a year-to-date total of 538. The Fire Marshal's Office did 107 inspections and the year-to-date total is 316. Three investigations were conducted and the year-to-date total is 9. There were no firefighter injuries and the year-to-date total is 0. There are 71 members. Sixty-six of them are active and 5 of them are on various types of leaves.

Chief Mike Garrahy said he wanted to expand on the lack of injuries that they have had. There had been two structure fires, which were substantial, in April. Both of these were occupied houses and these fires were one week apart. Each of these had been extinguished and abated without injuries to the firefighters or to the citizens. Both of these structure fires had been in the very early hours of the morning and he said a good job was done by all. For the second of these structure fires, it had been a very long duration one and they wrapped it up six hours after it had started. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said excellent job.

Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Chief Mike Garrahy if he could put this information into a document for this Committee's next meeting for all of them to look at because this is all really

good information. Chief Mike Garrahy said this is in his report to Town Manager Barbara Gilbert. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert told the Councilors that she will forward this on to them. Councilor Guy Drapeau said thank you. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert told them that she would send out this month's report to them tomorrow. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said great and she said thank you.

B. Ambulance

Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said that all she had was the number of calls the RHVAA had in April and their year-to-date. The RHVAA responded to 107 calls in April and Aetna had responded to 232. The year-to-date total for the RHVAA is 462 and the year-to-date total for Aetna is 926.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked the Councilors if they had any questions. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb if there is a trend and if there is a reason that Aetna's calls are so much more. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked if this is because Aetna is putting in more hours or he asked if this is because the frequency of calls are higher based on the hours that they are on call. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said Aetna is here during the daytime and there is more of a call volume during the day than there is in the evening. Councilor Guy Drapeau referred to the year-to-date total of 462 calls and he asked Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb if she knows how many of these they have billed for. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said she didn't have that number. Councilor Guy Drapeau said he wanted to know if the RHVAA is doing any pro bono things. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said they bill for all of their calls and they don't send anything to collection. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked what the average bill for a call is. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said she didn't know and this all depends on what was done. This is based on medical things that were provided, etc. A paramedic call would be a different charge for example. There is no standard charge. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked if there is a floor and a ceiling for this. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said she didn't know. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said they probably have to follow the Medicare guidelines at a minimum and Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said yes. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said there had been a great debate over consistency when the RHVAA had started billing way back. She explained some more about this and she mentioned again that this is based off of the Medicare guidelines. Councilor Guy Drapeau said he was aware of this. Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb said the RHVAA has a billing company that handles all of their billing so this is why she doesn't know what the figures are. She told Councilor Guy Drapeau that she could get this information for him if he would like her to. Councilor Guy Drapeau told Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb that he would if she didn't mind and he thanked her.

C. Police

Chief Mike Custer said the RHPD had 2,388 calls for service through the Dispatch Center in April. He told the Councilors that there was a monthly breakout at the bottom of the sheet they had with regards to how many of these were for the RHPD, the RHFD and the ambulance. There were a total of 39 criminal arrests. Forty-seven motor vehicle accidents were investigated. There were 9 arrests for people who were operating a motor vehicle under the influence. There were 241 infractions that were issued and 192 warnings so there was a total of 433 motor vehicle

stops for the month. There were 35 Town tickets that were issued. There were 584 hours for training.

Chief Mike Custer said there is one Dispatcher who is on light duty, as well as one Police Officer. The Police Officer is working in the Records Department now and this is maternity related. The Dispatcher is on a light duty status so this is requiring them to have a second Dispatcher. A little bit of overtime is being incurred there but this will be temporary.

Chief Mike Custer said a conditional offer has been made for the Police Officer vacancy they had. The background investigation has been started for this individual and they hopefully will be in the Police Academy for July.

Councilor Guy Drapeau asked Chief Mike Custer if there is a specific part of Town where more accidents are being seen or he asked if this is just everywhere. Chief Mike Custer said the Patrol Lieutenant tracks these but there are certain intersections where there are more accidents. Chief Mike Custer said in particular that these happen at the intersection of Cromwell Avenue and West Street. The RHPD tries to focus their traffic enforcement in areas like that as part of their reduction plan. There is an unbelievable volume of traffic coming through Town on these roads (Cromwell and Silas Deane Highway, etc.). Councilor Guy Drapeau said he was alluding to this because he wanted to know if there is something that could be done proactively and he told Chief Mike Custer that he was wondering if he had any recommendations in terms of streetlights. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said these are State roads and the Town has no jurisdiction. Chief Mike Custer said this is the problem. Councilor Guy Drapeau asked about recommendations to the State maybe. Town Manager Barbara Gilbert said they have asked to have the speed reduced where they have had a frequent number of accidents going northward from New Britain Avenue and the State wouldn't even reduce the speed.

Councilor Bill MacDonald told Chief Mike Custer that he noticed coming off of the highway today that there was a seatbelt check and he asked if he could talk a little bit about this. Councilor Bill MacDonald asked Chief Mike Custer if they are doing this in conjunction with another Town. Councilor Bill MacDonald said he has typically seen this in the past when the Town has received a grant. Chief Mike Custer told Councilor Bill MacDonald that this was exactly what he was seeing there. The Town gets grant opportunities from the Department of Transportation throughout the year so they apply for them. Chief Mike Custer said some of these efforts are just using some of the Police Officers from Rocky Hill and for some others, the MidState community (Berlin, Cromwell, Newington and Wethersfield) is used. This is the same thing with their DUI patrols. Some are in-house exclusively and other Towns are used for larger scale operations.

VI. OTHER

Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she had one point of clarification. She had been confused when they had been talking about the Scott Air Packs on revisit night (for the Town Council with regards to the budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015). She had thought there was a date in August but she saw in the Public Safety Committee Minutes that a Committee had gone to NIOSH. It looks like there was a date of August 24, 2014 so she asked how that is different from the June

date for planning purposes so that they can understand this. Chief Mike Garrahy said he didn't recall the date of August 24, 2014. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she was confused about that so she wanted to make sure that she understood it. Chief Mike Garrahy said the June meeting has always been a standing one forever. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said that had been discussed in the Minutes. She mentioned some more of what had been stated in the Minutes. Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom said a lot of dates had been mentioned and it could be very well that NIOSH is going to look at this in August but this is a NFPA Standard and they meet in June. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said she just wanted to understand what the discrepancy was. Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom said it is a process but NFPA is the governing agency. They look at NIOSH, etc. so there is a lot of collaboration that goes on but the Standard is produced by NFPA. Chairwoman Nadine Bell said very good and she said thank you for the clarification.

Chairwoman Nadine Bell asked if there were any other issues. There were none.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Guy Drapeau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bill MacDonald and adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth
Recording Secretary